



To the Right Worshipful

*The MAYOR, the Worshipful the AL-
DERMEN, the SHERIFFS, and other
Members of the COMMON COUNCIL
of the City of Bristol.*

GENTLEMEN,

THOUGH I never was desirous of appearing to the World in the manner I now do, yet several reasons determine me to publish this Discourse; your request, to which I pay the deference I ought; the prevention of any misrepresentation which might have been made of my Sermon; some hopes I have, that what I have here advanced may be of service to the cause of Christianity; and the pleasure I receive in being the means of letting the World see, that the Gentlemen of the Corporation of *Bristol* approved of a Discourse, made in de-

fence of the fundamental Article of all revealed Religion.

That you, and all those who profess themselves Christians, may be *zealous in good Works*, and *hold fast the Form of sound Words*, and *contend earnestly for the Faith which was once delivered to the Saints*, and by so doing *obtain Glory, and Honour, and Immortality*, is the Prayers and Wishes of,

GENTLEMEN,

Your most obliged, and

most obedient

bumble Servant,

Alex. Stopford Catcott.



P S A L. lxxxii. 6.

I said ye are Gods.

THE conciseness, clearness, certainty and signification of the *Hebrew* Scriptures, can be known to those only, who understand the language they are written in ; they are the repository of all knowledge, natural and divine, and their excellencies shew their Author. And it was necessary that they should be thus perfect. One great reason for publishing the *Hebrew* Scripture was, to secure the *Jews* from the infection of that mistaken worship, which the heathens paid to the matter and operations of the heavens ; by shewing them, that they were but mechanical agents, first formed, set to work, and afterwards occasionally over-rul'd by their Creator, the God of the *Hebrews*. But there was also another reason : As man takes in his ideas by his senses, and can have no immediate and adequate one of a spiritual Being, and as it was necessary that he should have some notion, however imperfect, of the Author of his existence, and Rewarder of his obedience, so it pleased the Creator to form the mechanical agents, which perform the great operations in this system, in such a manner, as by their substance and conditions, to exhibit to mankind, some faint resemblance of the Deity, and the

the persons in it, so far as man could take this idea, in his mortal state; above all, that his reasonable creatures might apprehend, in some degree, that method of redeeming them, which the Divine Persons had agreed on, and intended to pursue. By what means this knowledge has been so far lost, as it has lately been, is not before me now; I shall only say, that God (who never suffers his great and good designs to be render'd ineffectual, by the folly or wickedness of man, or the malice and cunning of *Satan*) hath, at a time, when reveal'd Religion seem'd to give ground before the assaults of its enemies, been pleased to enable some persons, so far to recover the knowledge of the *Hebrew* tongue, and, by consequence, of those points, which regard man's salvation, and to set them in such a light, as that the rage or subtlety, with which they are attack'd, will, from hence-forward, be utterly unable to oppose them.

I have been in myself convinced of the truth of these assertions, for some time, but never spoke them out till now; partly, because, in this self-sufficient age, a man who talks, as I do, is likely to be stil'd a visionary and enthusiast, unless he is pretty well qualify'd to make good his assertions; partly, because I should have been glad to have had some company along with me, in the prosecution and propagation of this knowledge; partly, because I did not care to lie under the imputation of affecting to appear wiser, or more learned than my brethren; and, partly, because I must treat my subject, in a manner, something above the capacity of a common audience to un-

stand entirely: but since others, I find, are silent; others, in their defences of our religion, give up to the enemy, points, they ought not; and others are preaching down Christianity as fast as they can, I dare not stand unactive any longer; and I will not lose this present opportunity, of beginning to open these things to believers; since, in this audience, there must be some, who both are capable of judging, whether I make good, what I undertake to do, in this discourse, and also of propagating this knowledge to others, if it seems to them worthy of being known.

This introduction, which may now seem foreign to my text, will, before I have done, be found necessary enough, since I shall explain the *Hebrew* Scriptures in another manner than you commonly have heard: but, if I undeniably make out the meaning of the text to be such as I assert it to be, I hope my hearers will have charity enough to believe me, when I tell them, that I could do the same by others, I must quote occasionally, would the time permit me to do so.

The words, which I have chosen to speak to, in our translation run thus, *I said ye are Gods*; 'tis agreed that Rulers are here spoken of; I must add, these Rulers were Kings; but the *English* word *Gods* gives not the sense of the original: To make this appear, I shall shew,

I. What is here meant by the word translated *Gods*.

II. Why Kings have this title.

III. Conclude with some observations, and an

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I. I shall shew what is here meant by the word translated *Gods*. It is אלהים אלהים, a name or noun derived from אלה Elah, or Alah; which as a verb signifies *to confirm by oath, to bind a person to fulfill certain terms under the penalty of a conditional malediction*; as a name or appellation, when applied to a person, a swearer to a Covenant; as a noun, when expressive of an action, an Oath: it occurs about forty times in Scripture, and always in this sense. I shall give an example or two, to prove my assertion. Gen. xxvi. 28. *Let there be now an oath (alah) between us.* Lev. v. 1. *If a soul bear the voice of swearing, (alah) and be a witness.* Deut. xxix. 12. *That thou shouldest enter into a covenant with the Lord, thy God, (Jehovah thy Elahim) and into his oath, (alah:) so four times in this chapter.* 1 Kings viii. 31. *If any man have a trespass against his neighbour, and an oath (alah) be laid on him to cause him to swear, (lehaloth.)* This may suffice to shew, that by Elahim, are to be understood Persons, who have sworn to a covenant, bave laid themselves under a conditional execration.

But, when any word expressing action occurs in the Old Testament, we must, according to the manner of applying it, by sacred writers, and the genius of the Hebrew tongue, trace it up to the *first and chief action and agent*; this gives the full idea, which will be found in some degree in all other inferiour usages of the word; let us apply this rule.

We read then Gen. i. 1. *That in the beginning the Elahim* (plural) *created* (singular) *the substance of the heavens and the substance of the earth.* Farther, we are told Gen. ii. 4. who these *Elahim* were; *In the day that Jehovah the Elahim created,* &c. so Psal. xviii. 31. Isai. xliv. 8. *Who is Eloah,* a participle passive, execrated, *besides Jehovah?* and in innumerable places, *Jehovah Elahim;* which word our translation still renders *Lord God;* nothing to the meaning of the Hebrew.

From hence then we have learn'd, 1. That those persons (for the word is plural) who created the World, had (before the action of Creation) performed an act which denominated them *Elahim;* and 2. That these *Elahim*, these *swearers to a covenant,* were *Jehovah.* Which word I must also explain. It is compounded of יְהָוָה *Jah*, *the essence,* and הָוָה *hovah*, *to exert powers;* so it signifies *Being with powers, or that which cannot but be;* and *being must have all active perfections.* So then *Jehovah Elahim* may be thus render'd, *the essence existing with powers, the persons bound in a Covenant;* not indeed, that it was possible either for them to falsify their obligation, or suffer penalty; but, there was no other word, by which the idea of this transaction between the *Elahim* could be convey'd to man, but this.

It will in the next place be necessary for me to set forth, what the matter of this Covenant was. It consisted of two parts, 1. That, in case man stood, and fulfill'd the terms requir'd on his part, he should, during his continuance in his proba-

tional state on Earth, enjoy the products and entertainments of a garden of delight, and after a sufficient degree of the knowledge and love of the *Elahim* acquir'd by him, be remov'd from Earth, without undergoing a separation of his soul and body, into an unalterable state of vision, and fruition of the presence of the *Elahim*. As man is not now concerned in the first part of the Covenant, so what would then have been his duty, is not enlarged on in Scripture. And that it was as I have said, appears from *Hosea* vi. 6, 7. and perhaps another passage besides. *For I desired mercy* and not sacrifice, and the knowledge of the Elahim, before burnt-offerings; but they, like Adam, have transgress'd the Covenant; (the terms required on the part of Man.)* This then was the first intent of the *Elahim*.

The second part, was conditional; that, in case Man fell, they then would put him into a method of Salvation, by one of the *Elahim* taking on him the nature which had transgress'd, fulfilling perfect righteousness, suffering in the offender's stead, and extending the benefits of his perfect obedience and meritorious death, to all, who should accept the terms proposed to them.

To prove this. 1. The *Elahim* swore; this their name shews; but farther, *Habac. i. 12. Art not thou from everlasting (miquidem, from thy first intent*

* The Word is תֹּהֵן and here signifies the Duty of *Adam*, in making proper returns to the *Elahim*, first by fixing his heart and affections on them, and next by manifesting this inward disposition of his mind by his outward actions.

tent to create Man) Jehovah, Elabi, (he who was bound by oath to redeem me?) So in the manifestations to the Patriarchs in consequence and reference to the original contract, Gen. xxii. 16. By my self have I sworn, saith Jehovah, that in thy seed shall all the Nations of the Earth be blessed.

Psalm lxxxix. 3, 4. I have sworn unto David my servant, thy seed will I establish for ever. cx. 5. Jehovah hath sworn, and will not repent, thou art a Priest for ever, after the order of Melchisedek. I shall cite the latter Scriptures, by and by.

2. They swore to put Man into a state of Salvation. To prove this, *Is. xlivi. 10. Before me there was no **HN** El Irradiator formed . . . I even I am Jehovah, and beside me, there is no Saviour. 45, 15, &c. O Elahim of Israel, the Saviour --- Israel shall be saved in Jehovah, with an everlasting Salvation, ye shall not be ashamed, nor confounded, world without end. Who hath declared this from ancient time (miquedem, as before) have not I Jehovah? there is no Elahim beside me a just God, and a Saviour; there is none beside me. Look unto me and be saved all ye ends of the earth, for I am God, there is none else; I have sworn by myself, &c.*

3. They swore to save man in the manner just related. To prove this, the texts already quoted in relation to the promised seed, shew this in part. But farther, it is said, *Gen. iii. 22. And Jehovah Elahim said, behold Adam is become like one of us, to know good and evil. Adam was become like one of them; so that the exemplar was first in one of the Elahim, of which Adam was become a copy; the text says expressly, that this likeness consisted*

in knowing (i.e. in the perception, in the experimental knowledge of) good and evil. Thus *Adam* was become (not like any in an undeterminate, or all of the *Elahim* in a general sense, but) like *one* of the *Elahim*; like *him*, who by virtue of the *oath*, was *experimentally to know good and evil*, by taking on him human nature, and suffering in it; this obligation took place by man's transgression, and man by the same act, and at the same time became himself also liable to the same experimental knowledge; so that he was become like *one* of the *Elahim*. The cruel insult upon lost and miserable man, put into the mouth of God, by commentators on these words, is highly injurious both to the Scriptures and the *Elahim*.

The apostate Jews have so confounded the revelation of the *Elahim* to man, with their designedly false constructions of all the principal words relating to this great transaction, and interpreters have been so weak in following them, and common Christians so misled by these, that things related in the most certain and intelligible manner, in the *Hebrew* Scriptures, appear amazing, when propos'd, nay even when explain'd to the generality of Christians; but to open to them, what hath been too long concealed, and is yet known but to few among us, is my present business.

It hath been a notion almost universally receiv'd, that the *Cherubim* were created spirits; for which there is not one word of proof in the Scripture. This owed its rise to *Philo Judeus*, the first perverter (by his allegories) of the *Hebrew* Scriptures, and common parent of all heresies. No! they were

were an emblematical exhibition given to man, of the covenant made between the *Elahim*. Man was become a miserable criminal, an outlaw banish'd from *Eden*, and the tree of lives ; but his merciful Creators had prepared another method of acquiring happiness, for him. Was it not necessary that Man should know this, and that some standing monument of this transaction should be set up, not only for the use of *Adam*, but that also of all succeeding generations ? And how should this be done, but by some Emblem ? The Divine Three could not appear to sense, nor could any real resemblance be given of them ; the figures of men (for a reason to be given presently) were not proper ; this then was the appearance (see *Ezech.* chapters x. xi. xli.) The heads of the Bull, of the Man and Lion together, and of the Eagle ; so there were three heads, and four visages : the bodies were all join'd in one ; by this signifying the unity of the essence, and the distinction of the persons, and man taken into the essence, by his personal union with the second person, whose constant emblem was the Lion. It now appears, why the figures of men had not been proper ; such an emblematical exhibition had not distinguished the man from the other three. This was named *Cherubim*, a word compounded of *Che*, *quasi*, a note of likeness, and *Rubim*, the great ones ; great in every respect and the highest degree ; the animals seen in this appearance were *Rubims*, great ones among the creatures ; the chief of the tame, and the wild and the winged kinds. So it was named, *the similitudes of the great ones*.

Moreover, the two figures stood, one over against the other, and the faces were turned toward each other, in the posture of persons entering into a covenant ; and they also all looked downward on the mercy-seat, and beheld the blood sprinkled there by the high-priest, as the true *Rubim*, the great ones in the highest heavens, turn their eyes on the meritorious sacrifice of Christ's crucified body, and blood poured out.

As man was not a party at making the covenant, so this figure, with the face of a man in it, could not be properly called *Elahim*, or *Che-Elahim* ; but as man by being united to a peer of the essence, became a *Rub*, a great one, so they might all be called *Rubim*, and the similitudes *Cherubim*. So a type of the *Messiah* is by *Ezech.* xxviii. 14. stiled an *anointed Cherub* ; so Christ, and he only, in propriety, was when on earth, called *Rubbi*, or *Rabbi*, my great one. Over these figures, when exhibited in the air, to the east of *Eden*, and at other times, appeared a light, brighter than the sun, which sent out rays as from a centre ; and the light in irradiation, or glory, was ever the emblem of Divinity. This was the first *Shechinah*, the visible residence of the divine presence ; so it is said, at the first exhibition, Gen. iii. 24. *Jehovah Elahim jishcan will inhabit the Cherubim*. These are the visages of *Jehovah*, which so often occur in Scripture, and which our translation renders *before the Lord* ; these were they from the presence of which, *Cain* so greatly dreaded to be driven ; for, as they had answers from these, worshipped toward them, and had their sacrifices

sacrifices accepted by fire streaming down from them and consuming the victim, so to be hid from these faces was an excommunication. In the sense of omnipresence, *Cain* could not be hid from the face of God. So in the solid representations of these similitudes, in the tabernacle and temple, the divine glory appeared over them; thence it is so often said, *Jehovah inhabiteth, sitteth, rideth over or upon the Cherubim*; and they are stiled, *Heb. ix. 5. the Cherubim of glory*. To explain these figures farther would require time, and I must now be brief; scarce a family, in those days, of believers or apostates, were without these images, their *Teraphim*; or in later times among the heathens, without their *Penates*: and these were the originals of all their hieroglyphicks, chiefly with two or three heads, generally those of the sacred animals.

There is also another word of great importance, which I must reclaim on this occasion. It hath been proved beyond all contradiction by the author, who first, since inspiration ceased, began to recover the true sense of the *Hebrew* Scriptures, that *Berith*, which has been rendered *Covenant*, always conveys the idea of *Purification*; the root is בָּרַר *Bar* or *Barar* to cleanse or purify. The idea is given *Jerem. xxv. 22. For though thou wash thee with nitre, and take much Berith Soap*, (the means to wash away uncleanness) *yet thine iniquity is marked before me*. And *Malach. iii. 1.* of which presently. And *Carath*, which when join'd to *Berith* is still render'd to make a covenant, never has any other signification (and it occurs

curs in abundance of places) than to cut, to cut off. So what is translated to make a covenant, should be to cut off a purifyer. This premised, I produce my proofs. Gen. xvii. 7. spoken to Abraham of the promised seed; *I will raise up my purifyer between me and thee and thy seed, for an everlasting purifyer to be Elahim unto thee, and to thy seed after thee.* xxii. 16, 18. to the same of the same, *By myself have I sworn, saith Jehovah—in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed.* So to David of the same, Psal. lxxxix. 3. *I have cut off a purifyer for my chosen, I have sworn unto David---thy seed, &c.* As the time, when the true purifyer was to be cut off, drew nearer, Jer. xxxi. 31. *Behold the days come, saith Jehovah, that I will cut off a new purifyer.* Ezech. xxxiv. 24. xxxvii. 26. *I will cut off for them the peaceful purifyer; the eternal purifyer shall be with them.* So, when the types were going to be superseded, and prophecy to be sealed up, the last promise is most express. Mal. iii. 1. *And Jehovah to whom ye seek shall suddenly come to his temple; even the agent of the purification, whom ye delight in; behold he shall come; he is like a refiner's fire, and like fuller's Berith soap.* This indeed, to raise up and cut off a purifyer, was the substance of the Covenant between the *Elahim*; but the act of covenanting is expressed by *Elahim*.

Let me here just observe two things; 1. That, as types used to bear the name of the thing typified, so the clean animals, the emblems of the spotless sacrifice, are, when sacrificed, called *Berith* also. 2. That when believers made a Covenant

nant with any one, they cut off a typical *Berith*, slew and offer'd a clean animal, before the typical faces of the *Elahim*; by this action, binding themselves to discharge the obligation they undertook, in imitation of the supreme *Covenanters*, and renouncing the benefits held forth to them by virtue of the Covenant between the *Elahim*, in case they falsify'd their oath. In a word, they meant exactly the same thing as we do, when we solemnly confirm a promise, by receiving the sacrament upon it.

I cannot now produce the hundredth part of the evidence for that side of the cause I am defending; I shall offer one hint more, and conclude this head. From the insertion of the *Jod*, in the third place of all the Redeemer's titles, as such, is signified, that, as he was such, all his actions had their full effect; so he was *Mashich*, *the anointed*, that we might be so to; *Berith*, *the purifier*, by virtue of whose cleanness, our pollutions might be washed away; *Tsadich*, *the just one*, whose righteousness, should make up our deficiencies; *David*, *the beloved*; *Chasid*, *the pious one*, &c.

Having thus shewn you, who the first and chief *Elahim* were, it will be proper to subjoin, what were the conditions required of man, in consequence to this covenant. Only I must here observe two things. 1. That as man was a creature compounded of נֶפֶשׁ *nephesh*, *a breathing frame*, and נֶשֶׁם חַיִם *nashem chaim*, *a soul of lives*, so he always had a double object provided for, and a double worship expected from him; one of and for the body, the other of and for the mind.

This twofold service was requisite in respect to his Creator ; that he might thereby acknowledge his double obligation to him, who gave him a human frame and reasonable soul ; and to shew his thankfulness for the provision of the means of happiness made for both, and his hope also of obtaining that happiness. So it was necessary too in regard to his fellow-subjects, that thus he might, for the sake of good example, and asserting his inward belief from his actions done in the sight of the world, shew before men, his hope in and dependance on *Jehovah Elabim*. Without an outward worship of the body, and external symbols in religion, the Church of God, as it is a visible society of material creatures, in a material world, never did, nor ever can subsist. 2. That *Jehovah* was, by right of creation, Lord and Proprietor of the earth, and made a grant of it to man on certain terms, which if the tenant broke, the lands reverted to the Lord.

I proceed now to set forth the terms required on the part of man : As the Covenant between the *Elabim* had two parts, so these also were twofold. What man, had he not fallen, had to do, I have shewn in part already ; I must add, he was to sanctify the Sabbath also ; to set apart that day, for the contemplation of the wisdom, power, and goodness of the *Elabim*, in their works, and the performance of other duties naturally consequent to such a religious employment of the mind.

And I must observe, that all the expressions relating to the culture of the ground in *Eden*, are in the *Hebrew* Scriptures after a wonderful man-

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ner, and such as cannot be conceived by those who know not that language, so formed, as to be adapted to, and include the service of the mind of *Adam* to an invisible and superiour object. Here, even here, were objects of sense, emblematical of objects of faith ; several hints of what some of these were, are to be found in the prophets, by way of reference or allusion, to what was done or to be done in *Eden*. *Moses* indeed expressly mentions no more, than was necessary for succeeding generations to know. From him then we are informed, that there were two trees planted in the middle of the garden ; one of these was a representative of the essence existing, and named the tree of *Lives* ; the other of the substance of the heavens, and called the tree of the knowledge of good and evil *. Had man, after a due time of probation, put forth his hand (exerted his power) gathered and eat the fruit of the tree of *Lives*, that had been a sacramental act, acknowledging his hope, faith, and expectation of his second and immortal life, in a state of perfect happiness of soul and body, from the divine essence, which alone could confer the second life ; so the tree, the emblem of the living *Elahim*, is in the plural number, named the tree of *Lives*. But man ventured to eat of the fruit of the fatal tree, and by an overt-act presumed to declare, that he hoped for wisdom, (and consequently happiness) from a created agent ; and thus, by ascribing incommunicable virtues to a fruit, forfeited his

* See *Levit.* xxiii. 40. *Isa.* xxx. 23. *Prov.* xxv. 11. *Cant.* viii. 5. And *Bate* against *Warburton*, from p. 5, to 13.

estate on earth, *the vegetable mould, adamah*, and, by consequence, the fruits of the ground, his own body and blood, and those of other animals, which all consist of the atoms of that mould ; and what was infinitely worse, as his better part concurred in the outward act of rebellion, so the *soul of lives* became liable to the dreadful penalty of eternal death. Then, in mercy, the second part of the covenant took place, and man had new terms offered to him. These, in general, were to perform such outward services, as should be expressive and declarative of his acknowledgement from the bottom of his heart, of his own offence, the justice of his punishment, his inability to recover himself, and his hope of salvation, by and thro' the meritorious sacrifice agreed on between the *Elahim*, and in due time to be offered in his stead. In one word, as the substance of the second part of the covenant between the *Elahim*, was to raise up and cut off a real purifier, so was man, in token of his repentance, faith, hope, and dependence on the means provided for his salvation, 'till the great atonement should be performed, to offer one of the clean animals, in sacrifice, to *Jebovah Elahim* ; to which offering, salt, which preserves from corruption, was to be added. This all the Patriarchs knew, and ever looked beyond the outward action ; and while they shed the blood of the victim, reaped the benefits of the great holocaust, by an act of faith. They all believed and owned, that their Redeemer was a person in *Jebovah*, in due time to take on him the human nature ; and they were ever prying into this great mystery

mystery of the incarnation. I must here recover one word more from misconstructions, מֶלֶךְ *Malach*; this when joined to *Jehovah*, has been always rendered the *Angel of the Lord*; but *Malach*, in the *Hebrew Language*, no more than ἄγγελος in *Greek*, determines the essence of the subject, it is joined to; it means *a messenger, an agent, a delegate, a person or thing empower'd to execute some commission, or do some action*; it is in many places apply'd to inanimate agents; and it is also apply'd to a person in *Jehovah*: so what is render'd the *Angel of the Lord*, should be, *the agent Jehovah, the sent Jehovah*. Who this was, appears at first sight, the person in the essence, who according to the œconomy established by and among the *Elahim*, *was to be sent* among men; and who, as an earnest of his coming in the flesh, appeared to the Patriarchs several times, in a human form; and when he did so, the context almost always infallibly determines who he was. I shall give one example. *Judges* xiii. 6, &c. *Manoah* and his wife expressly call him, *Ish Elahim, a person of the Elahim*; it is said, *then Manoah knew, that he was Malach Jehovah hua, the agent Jehovah himself*, and he crys out, *we shall surely die, because we have seen the Elahim*.

Abraham saw something of this dispensation, in his conversation with *Melchizedek*; *Jacob, Manoah, and Moses* wanted to know this person's name; a title, which should be expressive of what he was to be and do. *Moses* desired to see his glory, and wanted to know his way, but his face was not to be seen; yet a glimpse of his goodness, in

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the method (the way) of man's redemption, was indulged to him. *Elijah*, to check the warmth of his zeal for the law, was given to understand, that *Jehovah* was in the *small, still voice*; the gentle method of the publication of the gospel. Nay even *Eve* was so full of this knowledge and hope, that she crys out in rapture, at the birth of her first son, *I have gotten a man* (not from the Lord, from is not in the Hebrew, but) *Eth Jehovah, the very Jehovah, or the substance of Jehovah*. The same faith, hope, and joy appeared, on any occasional confirmation of the promise, in all those, thro' whose loins the promised seed was to be conveyed; by virtue of this being lodged in them, they were Princes in their generations, and claimed and had paid them, the highest respect, from all believers.

This whole œconomy opened under the gospel-dispensation, and he, who till then had been, *Da-bar Jehovah, the secret one to be revealed in the essence*, was made known to men; *John i. the word was made flesh*, and those who were worthy *saw his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father*.

It hath been thought, that the ceremonial law (as 'tis called) took its rise at mount *Sinai*; 'tis a mistake, it had been the terms to be performed by man, ever since the fall. To trace it backward, it appears from *Exod. xxxiii. 7. xvi. 9. xxxiii. 19, 22, 24*. That the *Israelites* had a tabernacle, typical visages or *Cherubim*, and Priests, before the institutions in the wilderness; and 'tis strongly implied *2 Sam. vii. 2, 6.* that they had

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a temple in *Ægypt*; 'tis certain, they had services to *Jehovah* performed there, on the interruption of which *Moses* and *Aaron* were sent to *Pharaoh*, to demand their renewal, and especially, leave to sacrifice a lamb, which had been a custom long before the *Passover*, *Gen. xxxv. 2. xxviii. 18. xxxv. 13. ix. 4. vii. 2.*

The Patriarchs caused their families to put away their strange *Elahim*, purified themselves, changed their garments, had standing representations, and *Teraphim*, anointed things sacred with oyl, poured out drink-offerings, had sacerdotal garments, stated times, and places of worship, and consulted the Oracle; blood was forbidden to be eaten, and the distinction of clean and unclean animals, was as old or older than the *Flood*. The first passage about sacrifice, occurs *Gen. ix. 4.* we will just consider it: *Then was the end of days; and Cain brought of the fruits of the ground, an offering unto Jehovah;* ('tis not for nothing that *Elahim* is not added, nor indeed once mentioned during the whole history of *Cain*;) *and Abel brought the firstlings of his flock, and of the fat; and Jehovah had respect* (I suppose fire streamed down from the *Cherubim*) *unto Abel, and unto his offering; but unto Cain and his offering, he had not respect.* Where lay the difference? The Author of the *Epistle to the Hebrews* helps us out. *Abel's offering was an act of faith, he slew, and offer'd a clean animal, cut off a typical Berith; confessed his transgressions, owned his life to be forfeited, and express'd his hope of Salvation, and faith in Christ.* *Cain made an acknowledgement*

ledgement to *Jehovah*, only as Lord of the Earth and its products, by a sort of quit-rent; so he was not justify'd, *his sin lay still at his door*. As all the Patriarchs offer'd sacrifice, so they all knew, own'd and expressed their hope, that they should share in the benefits of the great atonement. I make not the least doubt, but that when *Abraham* was about to offer up his son, the promised seed, he thought him to be the great Holocaust, who should suffer for the sins of the whole world. Nor do I any more doubt, but that our first Parents knew full well the meaning of that emblematic act of *Jehovah Elahim*, in covering their nakedness, with the skins of beasts (offer'd up in sacrifice, as I suppose, by *Adam*) instead of the fig-leaves, they had provided for themselves*; and that they came with all due preparation both of body and mind, to reap the benefits of that symbolical action.

Indeed after the business of the Calf (the malignity of which offence lay in rejecting the second person, as both Testaments assure us) some additions were made to the law, but the sum and substance were from the beginning the same.

As these outward memorials, and the whole system of sacrificature were absolutely necessary to be kept up, and continued 'till the *Elahim* should accomplish their promise; so 'till that was done, they were pleased to indulge and defend their loyal subjects, in the possession of a land, so situated and laid out, as made the proprietors of it necessarily observe the settled institutions;

and

* See *Bate* against *Warburton*, p. 26, 33, to 38.

and they also held their lands by the performance of this service; so that this at once gave them occasion to exercise, and was the reward of, their obedience to the law: but this temporal reward was also a pledge and earnest of what was to be given them hereafter. So when *Noah* cut off a typical purifier, and *Jehovah Elahim* accepted the offering, the vegetable mould was regranted, seed-time and harvest promised, and permission to apply to Man's use, the products of the ground and animals; but blood was still prohibited. So, on the same terms fulfilled on Man's part and accepted on that of the *Elahim*, *Canaan* was promised to the Patriarchs; a type and earnest of that heavenly country, towards which, as strangers and pilgrims upon Earth, they all had set their faces. So the delivery of their posterity from the bondage a foreign Prince, in a land of strangers, and their peaceful settlement in a delicious country, was typical of their rescue from the Slavery of *Satan*, and bands of death, and their admission into a state of unalterable happiness. See *Heb. xi.*

So long as the chosen people observed the terms of their purification, *Jehovah* their *Elahim* defended them, in their possessions against all their enemies, and made those very powers of the air, which the heathen took for, and depended on as, *Elahim*, (in opposition to which false Deities and mechanic Agents *Jehovah* is called the true and living *Elahim*) support and defend his chosen people, in a supernatural manner; nay, forced them to destroy their own worshippers. These privi-

leges were not to teach the *Israelites* to indulge themselves in sensual delights; but, as they had souls to be saved, as well as bodies to be sustained with food, to make them act like reasonable and immortal creatures, and look up to and depend only for their Salvation, on those *Elahim*, who alone were capable of saving them. Even *Moses* in his account of the new-created soul of *Adam* plainly asserts its immortality, by naming it a soul of *lives*; whereas the principle of action, or condition of existence of brutes is *חיה chajeh* put singular; and this distinction is observed not by *Moses* only, but all the inspired Writers in general. Even *Job* asserts the resurrection of the body; and there are vast numbers of passages, which prove that the benefits of the purification, which they exhibited, were to extend to all nations of the earth, and to last, to those who accepted the terms, to all eternity. As the *Israelites* broke or observed these terms, so they were alternately expelled or restored to the temporal estate, and on violating them at last, beyond all possibility of atonement or repentance, they were finally driven out; an earnest proof and foretaste, of what these apostates must expect hereafter.

By virtue, and in consequence of their acceptance and continuance in the terms, they were also, as liege subjects to *Jehovah Elahim*, obliged to cut off all rebels and deserters, and were commanded to enter upon their forfeited estates.

One observation more, and I have done. As before writing with letters was revealed, trees and animals were made use of, as substitutes or memorials

morials for things or actions ; so several of both, in the *Hebrew* tongue, have, beside their natural or descriptive name, an emblematical one ; which always is the same, with that of the person or thing they stood to represent. So an oak is called *alab*, as it was made an emblem of the Covenant, or perhaps of one of the *Elahim* themselves. For this reason the patriarchs under or near this tree, bury'd the false *Elahim*, had settled places of worship, built altars, hung up tabernacles, had manifestations of and from the *Elahim*, and interred their dead. *Joshua* xxiv. 26. after taking possession of the land of *Canaan*, cut off a purifyer, wrote words in the book of the law of the *Elahim*, took and set up a great stone (another emblem of the Covenant) under an oak, (*alab*) that was by the sanctuary of *Jehovah*. The heathen had their *alabs* too, but such as could give no shelter to their worshippers. *Is. i. 29.* And they made the images of their *Elahim* of the wood of this tree. *Is. lvii. 5. xliv. 14. Hosea iv. 13. Ezek. vi. 13. xx. 28.* Hence the oak became sacred to all nations. I shall now produce some proofs of the Covenant between the *Elahim*, and the means and method of man's redemption, as instituted by them, from the *New Testament*, and conclude this head.

As the coming and death of *Christ* discharged the *Elahim* of the obligation, so this very term could not be used under the *Gospel*-dispensation ; indeed as the persons were not only the swearers, but the witnesses also to the Covenant, *St. John's Three that bear witness in heaven*, seem to regard

it; but the following passages undeniably refer to and suppose it. John xv. 7. *The glory, I had with thee, before the world was.* Luke i. 70. *As he spake by the mouth of the holy prophets, to perform the mercy promised to our forefathers, and to remember his holy Covenant; the oath which he sware to our fathers.* Acts iii. 25. *The Covenant, which God made with our fathers, saying unto Abraham, in thy seed shall all the kingdoms of the earth be blessed.* Rom. xvi. 25. *The mystery which was kept secret since the world began, but now is made manifest---made known to all nations.* Gal. iii. 13, 17. *Christ redeemed us---being made a curse for us---thy seed which is Christ.* Ephes. i. 4. iii. 9. *He hath chosen us in him (Christ) before the foundation of the world---the mystery which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ.* Col. i. 26. *The mystery which hath been hid from ages, but now is made manifest to his saints---Christ in you, the hope of glory.* 2 Tim. i. 9. *Who hath saved us---according to his own purpose, and grace which was given us in Christ Jesus, before the world began, but is now made manifest by the appearance of our Saviour Jesus Christ.* Titus i. 2. *In hope of eternal life, which God that cannot lie, promised before the world began, but hath in due time manifested his word* (τὸν λόγον αὐτῆς) *Heb. vi. 16. God willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his council, confirmed it by an oath.* 1 Pet. i. 19, &c. *The precious blood of Christ, who verily was fore-ordained before the foundation of the world, but was made manifest in these last times.*

times. 1 John v. 9, &c. *If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater---and this is the record that God hath given us, eternal life, and this life is in his son.*

Thus I have shewn you, who were the chief Elahim, and what was the matter of the Covenant between them ; let us now see,

II. How the same idea is to be found in earthly Kings. The supreme Magistrate swore to a Covenant. 1 Sam. xi. 14. *Come, now let us go to Gilgal and renew the kingdom there; and all the people went to Gilgal, and there they made Saul king before the faces of Jehovah in Gilgal; and there they sacrificed sacrifices of peace-offerings before the faces of Jehovah.* 2 Sam. v. 2. *Thou shalt be captain over Israel; so all the Elders of Israel, came to the King to Hebron; and King David made a league (cut off a Berith) with them at Hebron before the faces of Jehovah, and they anointed David King over Israel.* 1 Sam. xi. 1. *And all the men of Jabesh said unto Nahash, make a Covenant (cut off, &c.) with us, and we will serve thee.* 2 Sam. iii. 12, 13. *Abner, when he came over to David, and took him for his sovereign, made a league (cut off, &c.) with him.* 2 Kings xi. 4. *Jehoiada, as proxy to Joash, who was under age, cut off a Berith with the Captains of the Guards, and took an oath of them, in the house of Jehovah, and shewed them the King's son.*

Moreover, the substance of the oath of Kings, was to be Saviours of their people ; to defend them in their possessions, and subdue their enemies ;

mies ; and they governed in consequence to this. Judges viii. 22. *Then the men of Israel said unto Gideon, rule over us--for thou hast delivered us from the hands of Midian.* 1 Sam. viii. 5, 20. *Make us a King to judge us and go out before us--and fight our battles.* Ibid. ix. 16. *And thou shalt anoint him (Saul) to be captain over my people Israel, that he may save my people out of the hands of the Philistines.* Jos. ix. 15. When the Gibeonites put themselves under Joshua's protection, and became his subjects, he made peace with them and cut off a Berith, to let them live ; and though Jehovah was King, the princes of the congregation (without consulting him) sware unto them ; and in consequence to this oath, they defended them against the five Kings who had conspired to destroy them ; and Saul's posterity suffered for his violation of this oath. 2 Sam. xxi. 1. Thus you see how the Idea of *Elahim* appears in the supreme Magistrate ; and this is an additional proof that I have given the true meaning of the word.

One thing more. Kings both among believers and apostates, all owned themselves to be but *Mesne Lords*, and that they held their lands, each under his respective *Elahim* ; and they thought too, that by virtue of a donation from them, (and on no other account) they might seize on those of others. This appears from several places of Scripture, but read Judges xi. And now to conclude with an observation or two, and an exhortation to the audience.

I have made it appear, that the terms of salvation offered to mankind by the *Elahim*, by virtue

tue and in consequence to the covenant they had made between each other, were, from the beginning, the same in substance. Of old they were, believe, love, obey the *Elahim*, receive as brethren and fellow-subjects, those who acknowledge them, destroy those, who own them not, exhibit typically, the means and manner of salvation, 'till the great atonement be made, and you will be saved. Now they are, believe, love, obey the *Elahim*, love those who love them, cut off from the Church those who own them not, commemorate, in the Eucharist, the past means and manner of salvation, and you will be saved.

From what hath been said, it is plain, that Christianity, or the method of man's salvation, was contrived and settled by and between the *Elahim* before the world was made, and that it actually began to take effect, and was known to, owned, and complied with, by man, presently after the fall; so that our most holy religion is, in very deed, almost *as old as the Creation*, tho' some, who knew not what they said, thought they had ridiculed it, when they said so.

The same sort of men, have been very free in their reflections on the *Israelites*, for driving out or cutting off the inhabitants of the land of *Ca-naan*. Where was the injustice, when they had forfeited the tenure, and their lives also? Do not earthly *Elahim* destroy the persons of rebels, deprive their posterity of the estate, and vest the property in their loyal subjects? But besides, the heathen nations were abominably wicked, cruel, past reclaim, and therefore not fit to live on the

earth. Had it been the lot of one of our Free-thinkers to have been a stranger in the streets of *Sodom*, or been leading off, to the fire or the altar, a victim to the *Elahim* of the Gentiles, and had a band of *Abraham*'s servants, or *Hebrews*, came in just before the fatal moment, rescued him from insults, or snatched him from the jaws of death, destroyed those who would have misused or murdered him, and on certain reasonable terms, permitted him to share in their forfeited estates, would he have blamed or reviled them for so doing? I believe not.

But I have something to say, to some others among us; those I mean, who are endeavouring to set up, what they call morality, *in opposition* to the belief of the articles of the Christian faith. How often have they profaned, by taking in their mouths, that text, *Hear, O Israel, the Lord, our God, is one Lord!* so they found it in their *English* bibles, and hoped to press it into their service in their war against the Trinity. How greatly do those men err because they know not the scriptures, neither the power of the *Elahim*! It proves the very doctrine, they cite it to disprove; it teaches the *Israelites* to believe and acknowledge, as the fundamental article of all revealed religion, the Trinity in Unity, and Unity in Trinity; the *Hebrew* runs thus; *Hear, O Israel, the essence existing with powers, those who have sworn to redeem us, (is or are) one essence existing;* they were to know, believe, and own, that there were three *Elahim* in *Jehovah*, and yet to know, believe, and own, that those three *Elahim*, were but one *Jehovah*. So

So it is now the doctrine of *our fashionable teachers*, *If thou believest in thine heart, and confessest with thy mouth, that Jesus is the Christ, thou mayest be saved*. We know, what they mean, but they know not the *state of the case*. They err again. The doctrine of three persons in one God was ever known to the *Hebrew* nation, they read it in almost every page of their bibles, and their whole religious service, was but an exhibition on the part of God, and an acknowledgement on the side of man, of the method of redemption agreed on by the *Elahim*; so that the sole dispute, between the first preachers of the Gospel and the native Jews, or proselytes, was, whether Jesus was the Christ, the promised seed, the man, who was to be united with the second person, and who, by being begotten by the most High, was the son of God; 'tis plain, they made the *Messiah*, and the *Son of God*, synonymous terms. So that this, to own Jesus to be the Christ, was enough to be believed and professed by Jews and Proselytes; but when the Apostles preached to the Gentiles who knew not the *Elahim*, they expressly required *them* to turn from the *vanities*, they had worshipped, and own the *living Elahim*.

How often have these men told us of late, that if we believe and confess one supreme, good, wise, powerful Creator and Ruler of the universe, and perform the social virtues, it will recommend a man to God. Again they err; these are not the *whole* terms of man's salvation. Indeed these notions are of longer standing than the spreaders of them know, but they are never the better for being

ing so. The nations which the King of *Affyria* transplanted into the cities of *Samaria*, feared and owned *Jehovah, the one supreme God*; but they kept and served *Elahim* of their own: so that they acknowledged not the persons in the Deity, nor the method of man's redemption contrived by them; and they are condemned for halting thus between revelation and imagination; they are said *not to fear Jehovah*. 2 Kings xvii. 34. This was indeed the very crime of *Cain*; therefore this believing *by halves* is by St. *Jude* stiled the *way of Cain, and denying Jehovah Elahim, and our Lord Jesus Christ*. This is said in opposition to the *full* belief and consequent practice of all justified persons, who are said to have *walked in the way of the Elahim, the way of Jehovah*; so Christ is called the *way*, Christianity the *way*, and Christians men of the *way*; and if this be the *way*, what must become of those men, who are so far got out of the *way*?

Now that text too is clear, with which our Lord silenced the *Sadduces*; *Jehovah is the Elahim* (he did not quote *Greek, Θεος*) of the *living and not of the dead*; the persons in the essence were bound by oath to deliver the patriarchs from the bands of death, therefore they were to rise again, *Luke xx. 37*.

A man cannot keep in his struggling indignation, to see the divine oracles thus misapplied or misinterpreted, thro' ignorance or malice or both; but thus it must be, while illiterate and conceited men presume to quote writings, which they cannot read, *reason* about things, whereof they have

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no ideas, and give judgment in cases, where they do not see one tittle of the evidence. The best that can be said in their excuse is, that they know not what they are doing ; but I wish they would consider in due time, whether when Christ (the person whom they are opposing, and who should have been their Saviour) shall, at the last day, call them to a sad account for all the dreadful consequences of their pernicious doctrines ; I say, I wish they would consider, whether at that time, ignorance can be deemed a tolerable excuse in the mouths of those, who took upon them to be teachers of others.

A word to believers and I have done. I have in some degree laid open the chief mystery and fundamental article of all revealed religion ; I hope to the confirmation of the faith of my audience ; let the effects of this belief be seen in your lives and actions. Indeed the miracles wrought in confirmation of Christianity are a sufficient ground of assent to an unprejudiced person ; but it is a vastly greater satisfaction, to take in all those also, done in proof of the divine original of the Law, to see that the two testaments tally like two indentures, and the whole purport and scope of both, is to shew the necessity and provision of the means, by which the justice of an offended God is satisfied, and induced to pardon sinful man. The first Christians understood the *Hebrew* Scriptures, as I have been opening them to you ; this is evident, from their application of several passages in them, the justness and propriety of which, has not been fully understood of late ; and as Christians then

knew more than they do now, so they lived better: as this knowledge is recovered and spreads among us, 'tis to be hoped we shall amend our lives, and of a nation the most fantastically vicious, and stupidly prophane, that ever called themselves believers, become *entire* Christians, take *Jebovah* for our *Elahim*, our Saviours, and live accordingly.

That we may do thus, depends in the greatest measure on persons in authority; as the rulers are, such generally are the people; nay, these have sometimes suffered for the faults of those. The common crime of the Kings of *Israel* was misbelief, and of consequence mispractice; I need not tell you, how both they and their subjects were plagued on that account. We are informed that among their other punishments, *when they chose new Elahim, then was war in the gates*; even the peaceful and august courts of justice were disturbed and polluted with tumults and bloodshed. This is a miserable condition for a nation to be in; but this and all other temporal punishments are but preludes and foretastes to what must be endured hereafter; *the wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations who forget the Elahim.* Psal. ii. 10. *Be wise now therefore, O ye Kings, be instructed ye Judges of the earth; kiss the son lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little.* And for your encouragement to observe the terms he offers you, remember also, that *blessed are all they, that put their trust in him.* Your faith in him will be your comfort at the agonizing hour, *when you*

Shall die like men, and fall like one of the princes,
Psal. lxxxii. 7. Then this reflection may support you under the terrors of death and amazing prospect of eternity, that so sure as the *Elahim* cannot falsify their oath, so sure, when a few short pangs are over, your obedience shall meet its reward ; you will soon pass through the shades of death, and be admitted to the glorious mansions prepared for those who love them. There you will meet all believers, all who by *walking in the way of the Elahim*, have arrived at the regions of bliss before you. What a pleasure will it be to hear our first parents relate, what was the happy and free intercourse between the *Elahim* and themselves, before their fatal transgression ! How must we be affected with the narration, when they shall give us to understand, the anxiety, the terror, the despair, that overwhelm'd their minds after their eating the forbidden fruit ! the faith, the hope, the joy that sprung up in their souls, at the publication of the second terms ! With what attention and delight shall we listen to the patriarchs, their own mouths telling us, with what longing desire and eager impatience they hoped, they waited, they wished for the manifestation of him, who was to be *the desire of all nations !* And with what a mixture of exulting joy, and holy awe, some favourites of heaven were admitted, to a sort of converse, of him, and saw a glimpse of what he had undertaken to do for them, their posterity and all believers ! The holy angels too, those benign and amicable spirits, how will they rejoice to see the seats left vacant by their fallen

fellows,

fellows, filled with the spirits of just men made perfect! how will they congratulate us on our past escapes, and our admission to an unalterable state of happiness with themselves! With what delight will they tell, and we shall hear, of the sincere complacence in man's recovery, with which they first saw the great mystery of our redemption ideally exhibited in the highest heavens, and afterwards rejoiced to see the happy effects of it upon earth. Then, what is above our present comprehension, and shall be our employment to all eternity, we shall no longer *see the Elabim as through a glass darkly, but view them face to face*; be admitted to the full vision of their ineffable, inconceivable glories, *drink at the well of Lives the living water, which who so drinketh shall never thirst again; eat the bread that came down from heaven, and the fruit of the tree, whose leaves are for the healing of the nations, see light in the light of Jebovah*; in one word, be supported by the immediate irradiation of the divine essence! Then the whole œconomy of Mankind's Redemption, as it was contrived, agreed on and transacted by the divine persons, shall be laid before us! Then the unknown sufferings of our dear Redeemer, for our sakes and in our steads, will be communicated to us! How must we even amidst heavenly joys, feel some sensations of uneasiness, and, as it were, sympathize with him, in his past agony! How will our souls be filled with a grateful sense of all his benefits towards us, rejoice to see that bleeding lamb advanced to the highest honours, and sitting on the throne of the *Elabim*! How shall we congratulate

gratulate ourselves, when placed around him, and reaping the invaluable blessings he hath purchased for us! These are noble contemplations and ravishing prospects; and yet they are but faint shadows and scanty foretastes of those real and substantial joys, which the *Elahim* have prepared for true believers. These then let us endeavour to acquire by a *full* faith and sincere obedience; so that when we, with those who *sleep in the dust*, *shall awake*, it may not be to *everlasting contempt*; but our *lot may fall among those, who being wise themselves, and turning others also to righteousness, shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and as the stars for ever and ever!* Which God grant, &c.

F I N I S.

N. B. I ought to inform my readers, that the author hinted at in the Sermon is Mr. HUTCHINSON; I shall bless God, to my dying day, that his good providence ever brought me acquainted with that Gentleman's works and person: for though I was obliged to the common methods of education, that I was qualified to read his writings; yet that I, in any degree, understand the *Hebrew* Scriptures, I owe to his instructions. I would (might I presume to do so) earnestly recommend the study of his books to my brethren the Clergy; it is true, it will cost them some pains to apprehend fully the strength of his arguments and propriety of his expressions: but, that once done, they will meet a noble reward of their labour, even the greatest satisfaction in the most important points of Christianity, which the heart of man can wish for. I also make use of this opportunity to recommend to my readers the perusal of a treatise which I have read since I preached this Sermon,

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(and never till then) and which treats on some things mentioned here, more at large than I could be allowed to do on this occasion. It is entitled, *Some Thoughts concerning Religion Natural and Revealed, &c.* By that, and some other treatises about Mr. HUTCHINSON's works, they will find that, however new these things appear to some among us, several persons who want neither sense nor learning have applied themselves to understand them ; and that I do not stand single in my judgment about these matters.

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AS the former Publication of the foregoing Discourse gave rise to a Controversy, the Reader may be pleased to see what Treatises have been publish'd in the Course of the Dispute.

- I. Observations on a Sermon, &c. by the Reverend Mr. Arthur Bedford, (Recall'd by the Author.) *Lond. 1736*
- II. Bibliotheque Britannique, Article IV. *à la Haye 1736*
- III. Remarks on the Observations, by Mr. Hutchinson. *Lond. 1737*
- IV. An Answer to the Observations; with an Appendix, being a Reply to the French Critick in the Bibliotheque Britannique. By the Author of the Sermon. *Bristol 1737*
- V. An Examination of Mr. Hutchinson's Remarks, and Mr. Catcott's Answer; by the Author of the Observations. *Lond. 1738*
- VI. The State of the Case between Mr. Bedford and Mr. Catcott, in answer to Mr. Bedford's Examination. By Mr. Catcott. *Lond. 1738*
- VII. An Answer to Mr. Bedford's Examination. By the Reverend Mr. Daniel Gittins. *Lond. 1739*
- VIII. The Examiner examin'd; or, Mr. Bedford's Examination consider'd. *Lond. 1739*
- IX. Observations on some Sermons, preach'd at Lady Moyer's Lectures at St. Paul's, 1739, and 1740, by A. Bedford, M. A. By Mr. Gittins. *Lond. 1741.*





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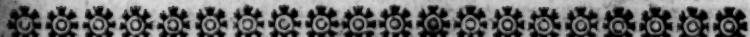
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